



NEWS FROM THE FLOCK

Sept 2026 / Issue 1

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Next Program

Thursday, 7:00
Sept. 24, 2026
Yates 102, PSU
Pittsburg, KS

"Greenbush at 50"
by Amy Brown,
Project Manager.
Greenbush is an
educational facility
located west of
Girard with
opportunities for
birding and fishing.
Learn what
Greenbush offers for
nature lovers of all
ages.

Become a member
for \$20.

Welcome to another year of
great programs, and field trips.

WHAT A LONG HOT SUMMER!

Talk about months of extremes. Spring was so rainy that it seemed like Washington state, including the worst flooding that we have had in 40 years near our house. But then to make the summer more interesting, we entered many weeks of the worst drought that we have seen since we moved here in 1985. Records have been broken everywhere...hottest summer globally. More plants needed watering. Native plants

of course survived better, but even those suffered leaving pollinators with fewer flowers.

Fall may bring relief. We will certainly know by spring what plants went into dormancy and what died.

Cindy Ford



Board Minutes...Steve Ford

The board met August 29, 2026, at Kathy and Terry Fox's house. Present: Wayne Bockelman, Megan Corrigan, Cindy Ford, Steve Ford, Kathy Fox, Terry Fox, Andy George, Elizabeth Mangile, Robert Mangile, Diane McCallum. President Andy called the Planning Meeting to order at 2:10 pm.

** Minutes from April 30, '26 meeting approved.

** Wayne reported \$4,107.42 in the checking account at Commerce Bank. Our CD will mature at Arvest Bank next Friday, Sep. 4. Kathy will head up team to visit Arvest to determine what the matured funds are, and to look into various other local bank's CD rates (including those of Arvest). She will report her activities at the September board meeting prior to the first general S-G Audubon meeting. The board was reminded that annual membership dues are due at the September meeting: \$20.00 for both single and family membership.

** General meetings will be, as always, at PSU in Yates 102, at 7:00 pm the last Thursday of the month. It is reserved through 2026. The board meeting will start at 6:00 pm in the Heckert-Wells 3rd floor lounge just prior to the general meeting.

** A vote was passed to donate \$250 to KRPS in support of their "Bird Talk" and to encourage their advertising our monthly meetings.

** Speakers: September 24, Amy Brown - Greenbush; October 29, David Penny from Missouri Southern U. - a "scary topic." or perhaps Cindy Ford; December, Gabe McClain's - Prothonotary Warbler Study; January or February, John Imhoff. Steve will pin him down. Megan asked for help finding speakers. Zoonosis as a topic was mentioned. Andy will inquire of Dr. Gosh in PSU's Biology Department.

** There was a wide ranging discussion on this year's activities, including concern about dwindling attendance, a stagnant board membership, and eversome officers and staff. What can we do?

** Andy is willing to do bird hikes, but naturally is discouraged at poor attendance. Diversity of locations, and aggressive advertising was suggested, but last year's efforts included these. Perhaps an owl walk in winter. The first walk will be at Greenbush in early October. Andy and others will lead it/them. Other walks will be scheduled on a wait-and-see basis.

** Steve suggested rather forcing the issue of refreshments in Yates 102. Refreshments may be more of a draw than previously supposed. This room has been provided free to S-G Audubon (and other community groups) for many years, and serves us well. In return our chapter brings in many speakers

Treasurer Report...Kathy Fox

September 2026

Beginning Balance (June 1)	\$ 4013.99
Credits	\$ 297.85
(Memberships, Donations)	
Debits	\$ 83.42
(Chicken for Picnic)	
Ending Balance (Sep 2)	\$ 4228.42

Minutes (cont.)

and community members to the campus, and over the years has contributed several thousand dollars to the university (Nature Reach, student projects). We could pledge to keep the room clean. Andy will look into this. Meanwhile Megan said she would explore other room options at PSU, perhaps the Nursing or Business buildings.

** Steve brought up past activities that seemed to be popular, but admittedly were questionable at securing new members:

(1). A public "Birding 101" class at the Natural History Reserve on a Saturday morning, to include indoor work in the lab and an outdoor field trip, perhaps followed the next Saturday with another field trip around the county.

(2). A "Cell Phone Nature Photography" seminar, including indoor discussions/demonstrations and outdoor work with "experts."

(3). A redo of Kathy et al's in-house photography exhibit at the May picnic and subsequent exhibit at a local restaurant (Balkins-formerly Root?; Frontenac Library?)

These ideas were discussed briefly, but none were nailed down. There were no new ideas.

Andy reported two big new projects were in the mill in the Biology Department:

(1). An amphibian and reptile research project probably involving several graduate students.

(2). GLADE Camp. Modeled on a successful Springfield project wherein about 20 selected high school students would attend a week-long, field-oriented, sleep-over camp, and work with local experts in several aspects of hands-on nature projects. PSU would partner with Greenbush. The camp would be free to the students. Developments are in the early stages.

** Andy also noted Gabe McClain will finish his prothonotary project, but an extension of that project in some form, perhaps another Master's project, would be desirable. The board was enthusiastic about such an extension, given our chapter's involvement thus far.

** Thanks Kathy and Terry for hosting the meeting!



Photo by AOK

It's always a pleasure to see old Audubon friends at the May picnic, several of whom cannot always make it to the regular meetings. As

much as

Auduboners enjoy seeing and hearing about birds it is NOT a sin to wrap a lip around one occasionally (I'm talking fried chicken here, not chickadees), plus the delicious salads and desserts contributed by participants. Thanks to all who attended.

We were honored to have the Executive Director of Audubon of Kansas, Dr. Jackie Augustine, as speaker. During her visit to southeast Kansas Cindy and I were pleased to introduce Jackie to a couple of special conservationists in our area. Max and Ewelene Good were kind enough to show us their wonderfully restored forty acres near Parsons: "The Good Woods." Immediately on walking to the marsh we saw a yellow-crowned night heron, a green-backed heron, and an American egret. Jackie's "Good Ear" caught Acadian flycatchers, young gnatcatchers and many other birds. Wildflowers, a specialty of the property, were abundant.

We also introduced her to a quiet giant of Cherokee County nature education, Linda Phipps, who was the primary force behind restoring and equipping the old scout shelter in Galena's Schermerhorn Park, now the wonderful Southeast Kansas Nature Center. Linda gave us the grand tour, including a short hike to the cave. Jackie's eyes proved as keen as her ears when she spotted a tiny grotto salamander in the small stream flowing from the cave.

She also conducted breeding bird surveys on Cynthia Pfannenstiel's property west of Pittsburg, and on ours.

But we still wouldn't let her drive back to her home in Topeka until she gave us a program on all the National Parks she has

visited, "A National Park Quest," as she calls it. She is halfway through all of them, having seen thirty-two.

We saw her beautiful photos and heard about highlights of her adventures in each, along with tips for maximum enjoyment. (In many, like Yellowstone, it's important to get to the park at dawn if you want to see the greatest diversity of wildlife.) Yellowstone was her favorite, including the iconic Old Faithful geyser, but she says the Grand Geyser is far more spectacular, just not as faithful in its timing.

Who flies into glittering Los Vegas, rents a car, then immediately leaves town for Death Valley? Dr. Augustine does, and she makes it sound exciting in describing the physical diversity of this very large park. She gushed over Carlsbad Caverns in New Mexico and Big Bend in Texas, but she also very much liked lesser visited places like the diverse Theodore Roosevelt NP in North Dakota.

All the parks have their spectacles and charms she says, but do your homework before you go. Plan ahead. Many parks have timed entry, so you can't always just show up and expect to get in. Plan your meals and restaurants. If in mountains, always be prepared for snow. Wildlife is boss. In some parks you may have to wait a long time for bison herds to free up your road. Make plans for, shall we say, makeshift restrooms.

Haleakali, Hawaii is next on Jackie's list, and all of Alaska. It's been said that the National Parks are America's best idea. She advises: don't put off seeing them.

Jackie is a busy lady indeed. We appreciate her multi-faceted visit to our little corner of the state and applaud the good work of Audubon of Kansas.



PHOTOGRAPHERS' NOTEBOOK

Kathy Fox Photos

Kathy has her camera close by as she observes nature activities at her slice of natural paradise just outside of Pittsburgh.



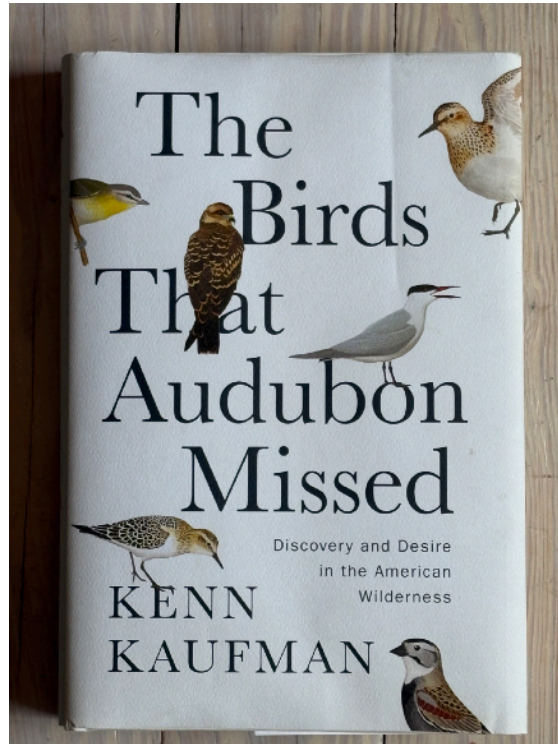
Wood Pewee



Garden Spider

The Birds That Audubon Missed

Book Review by Steve Ford



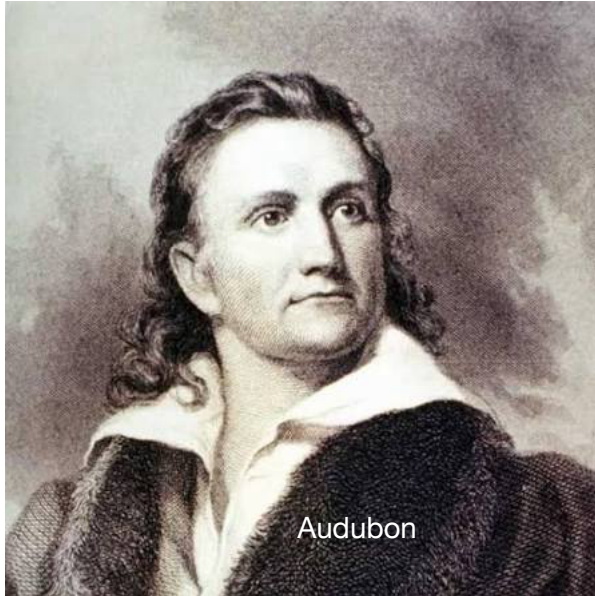
“Summer reading” has a bad rap. It implies laying around the beach reading romance novels. I gave that up years ago, but I do want to tell you about a book I read this summer: Kenn Kaufman’s *The Birds That Audubon Missed* (2024). It’s not steamy romance— “Birds” is not a metaphor for attractive young women as it used to be in Britain. Audubon had his unsavory points, but philandry evidently was not among them. Fraud and slavery was.

Kaufman, now in his early 70s (he grew up in Wichita by the way), has been passionate about birds since the day he was hatched. He has been a maintstay in American birding literature for decades with 13 field guides and memoirs to his credit starting with *Kingbird Highway* when he was 19. He developed his painting chops with “The 20th Century Audubon,” Roger Tory Peterson, who popularized birding in 1934 with his famous field guides.

The Birds That Audubon Missed is a serious fruit salad of American ornithological history from Mark Catesby in the 1700s through Peterson and beyond with the current explosion in birding technology.

I say “fruit salad” because the book is far more than just history. Kaufman wraps his people and birds in contexts both of their times and ours. John James Audubon is certainly the central sun around which most other stories orbit, not just as a demi-god of pioneering natural history in America, but because of his complicated persona.

(Kaufman cont.)



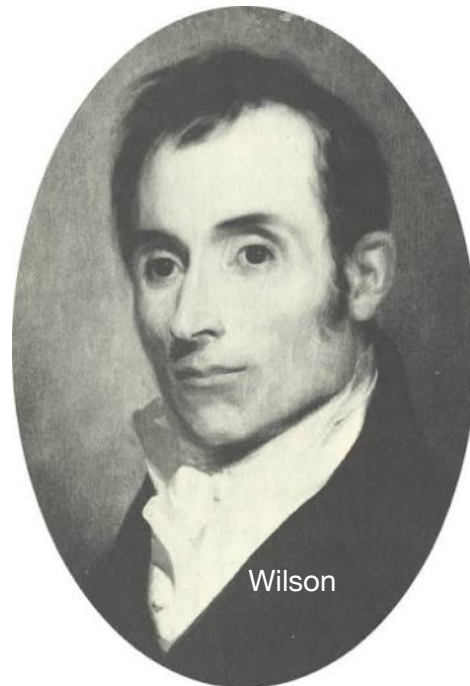
Kaufman indeed writes of his genius for portraying birds (exploring many of Audubon's techniques) and his relentless quest for new species to describe. But several early naturalists were scouring the wilderness as well. The older Alexander Wilson, although far inferior to the flamboyant Audubon as a painter and self-promoter, was quite the better scientist and writer. Audubon was diligent, but Wilson exhausted himself in his efforts to make a living publishing his *American Ornithology*. He died trying in 1813 at the age of 47.

Decades after Wilson's death, Audubon was still plagiarizing him, and

others. Audubon became a celebrity because of his huge book of superb life-sized bird paintings, but sadly, despite his talents and eventual fame, honesty was not a priority for "The American Woodsman," as he liked to call himself.

He was, however, a crack shot. Binoculars had not been invented, so being an earnest naturalist meant killing thousands of birds of all species. "Keep your gun always ready" admonished ornithologist Elliott Coues as late as 1874. "Shoot an unknown bird on sight; it may give you the slip in a moment, and a prize may be lost."

So Kaufman lionizes Audubon, but only to a point. He, Kaufman, addresses issues that have come to light among the general public only recently. Audubon spent much time in the South, owning slaves much of the time, as did some influential friends. The Reverend John Bachman (Bachman's warbler), of Charleston, is an example.



(Kaufman cont.)

In a similar vein, the book discusses bird names. Should birds named for people who had character flaws—at least in our modern views—be retained? Indeed, the National Audubon Society itself only lately voted to keep its name intact, even though local chapters are free to jettison “Audubon” (The Lawrence Audubon chapter is now the “Lawrence Bird Alliance.” Ugh. My humble opinion). The sea duck offensively called “oldsquaw” because of its constant gabbling voice has been renamed “long-tailed duck.”

Kaufman gets into the weeds to outline how early naturalists tried to determine what birds were new species or subspecies or previously unrecognized new forms. He explores difficulties in determining differences in sexes, ages, seasonal plumages, regional differences in songs, webbing in shorebird feet, subtle habitat preferences, ecological considerations, etc. (I liked the crossbill discussion.) It may be a bit much for casual birders who simply want to appreciate their feeders. Still, Kaufman is an engaging writer, providing a varied, intriguing read for those willing to grab their fowling piece and wade in. Summer reading? The subtitle of the book is “Discovery and Desire in the American Wilderness.” Lay down your *Debbie Does Dallas* and give *The Birds That Audubon Missed* a shot.



Bachman's Warbler,
named after
John Bachman,
slave holder.

Happenings in Southeast KS

IMAGES OF A HOT SUMMER

Sightings...



Giant Swallowtail in Mangile Yard



Liz Mangile with her Chickens



Photo by C. Ford

Ant Lions Waiting to Capture Prey
(The insects are small but have large
jaws to grab the vulnerable prey as it
falls into the hole.)



Bob Mangile talking to his
Chickens

(Mangile Photos by Bob)



Photo by S. Ford

Wildlife even Indoors at
the Ford's. (This gray
treefrog was visiting.)

Application for Membership Sperry-Galligar Audubon Society

For **FIRST-TIME** National Audubon Society membership, send \$20.00 online or by mail **directly** to National Audubon Society. You will receive 4 copies of the Audubon Magazine annually and 8 copies of the Sperry-Galligar Audubon Chapter Newsletter.

Be sure to include the code, **J-10** on your check to indicate in which Audubon chapter you belong and your **e-mail**.

.....

For local membership **ONLY** pay \$20.00 to Sperry-Galligar Audubon Chapter and receive 8 newsletters per year informing you of all our local activities. You may pay in person at a meeting by cash or check or send a check by mail or online through Paypal.

Be sure to include the code, **J-10** on your Paypal transmission. Find Paypal on the Sperry-Galligar website or Facebook page.

.....Cut Here.....

To mail a check, please print and send to:

Sperry-Galligar Audubon Chapter
431 E. 126 Hwy.
Pittsburg, KS. 66762

_____ Yes, I wish to become a member of the local chapter. (\$20)

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip Code _____

E-mail _____



Sperry- Galligar Audubon Society

Meetings are held the last Thursday of the month:

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Room 102 Yates Hall

Pittsburg State University

Pittsburg, KS.

November/December meeting dates combined typically the first week in December. No meetings in June, July, or August.

EVENTS & ETC.

Native Plant Sales

Visit some native plant nurseries to create your own pollinator garden.

Peyton's Potting Shed
peytonspottingshed@gmail.com

.....
**Shoal Creek Conservation
Education Center, Joplin**
Sat., September 19
10:00 - 2:00

What have you seen?
What do you think?
Please, the newsletter
needs your input.

Please submit articles or photos to the newsletter editor by the 10th of each month. Next submission date:
OCT 10. Send to:
cford@pittstate.edu

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS.

Pay membership dues in September.
Please consider paying local membership dues. Our chapter receives 100% of the local dues only. You can subscribe to both local and national. Either way you get the Sperry-Galligar Newsletter.